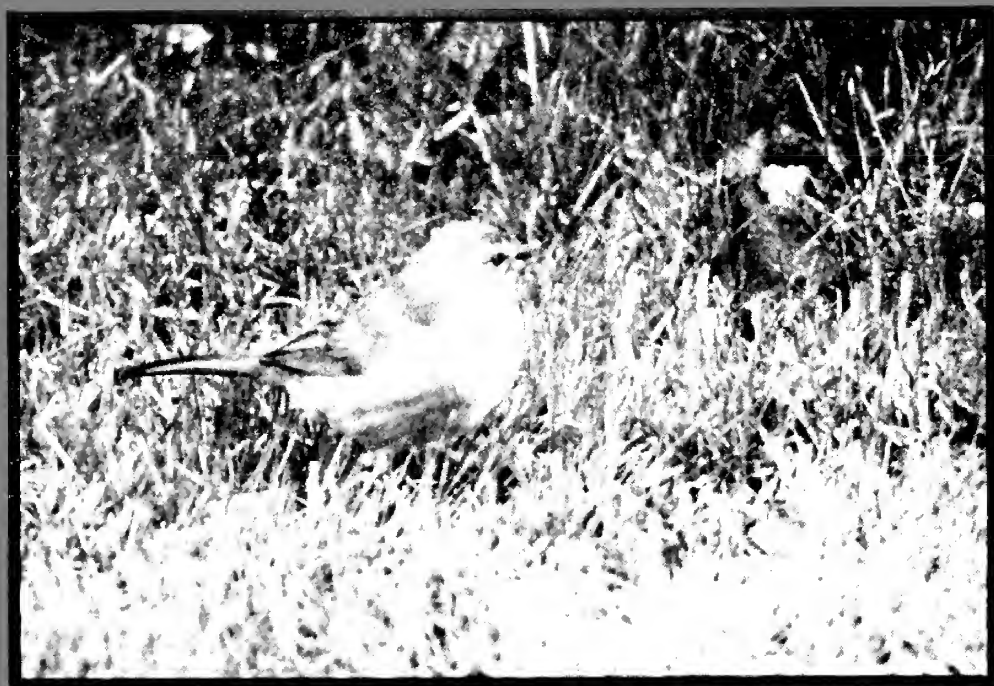


# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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Summer 1990 Volume 60 Number 3



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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FRONT COVER: Green-tailed Towhee, West Des Moines, May 1990. Photo by Christine A. Quinn

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BACK COVER: Meeting Dates, Report Deadlines, Birdline, Materials Available.

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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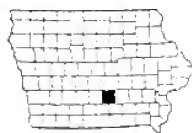
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# NEST-BOX AND HABITAT USE BY EASTERN SCREECH-OWLS IN SOUTH-CENTRAL IOWA

DAVID W. DE GEUS AND JOHN B. BOWLES



Local declines of the Eastern Screech-Owl (*Otus asio*) across the United States prompted the National Audubon Society to "Blue List" the screech-owl in 1981 and later name it as a species of special concern (Tate 1986). The cause of these declines is unknown, although loss of natural nest cavities may be a major factor (VanCamp and Henny 1975). In an effort to collect more information on screech-owl nest-box and habitat use, we studied their response to introduction of nest boxes during two nesting seasons.

## STUDY AREA AND METHODS

Sixty nest boxes were erected between November 1984 and January 1985 in Summit Township, Marion County, Iowa. Woodland comprises 14.3% of this 103 km<sup>2</sup> south-central Iowa township, while the remainder is mostly cropland, i.e., corn and soybeans. Woodland exists in the form of small woodlots on farmsteads, steep hillside pastures, and narrow strips along small streams.

Nest boxes were constructed according to plans provided by the Missouri Department of Conservation (1983). Boxes were placed at a height of 4.6 m on the southeast side of trees ranging from approximately 15-75 cm diameter breast height. Farmstead, upland, and riparian woodlots were chosen for 15, 23, and 22 nest boxes, respectively.

Nest boxes were checked in late April and early May of 1985 and 1986. Pellets, prey remains, or whitewash were used as indicators of use if no owl was present. Boxes were revisited in late May, and remaining adults or nestlings were weighed and banded with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lock-on leg bands. During January and February of 1986 a winter usage inspection was conducted, and debris deposited by Eastern Fox Squirrels, European Starlings, or House Sparrows was removed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nest-box use--Screech-owls used nest boxes as roosts and feeding stations in winter and early spring. Most returned to natural roosts in foliage as trees renewed leaf growth later in spring. Nest-box occupancy by screech-owls varied from 17% in spring 1985 and 15% during the winter of 1985-86 to 22% in spring 1986. Screech-owls use alternate roosts (Merson et al. 1983), so absence during some nest-box checks may have depressed the 2-year average of 18%.

The screech-owl nest-box use that we observed is comparable to a 3-year average occupancy rate of 20% and 27% in spring and winter respectively in eastern Tennessee (Fowler and Dimmick 1983). The spring-use rate in our study was also close to a 12.9% occupation rate in a 30-year study in Ohio (VanCamp and Henny 1975).

Young screech-owls were produced in four nest boxes in 1985 and four in 1986. Two nests were deserted in 1985. Thus the two-year average nesting rate for our boxes was 8.4%, with owls fledging from 6.7% of the nest boxes. Our values are comparable to the 8.9% nesting rate reported by VanCamp and Henny (1975) and 10% by Fowler and Dimmick (1983).

Roadside playback surveys located an average of 18 screech-owls in the township (De Geus and Bowles 1990). Others have demonstrated that such surveys provide population estimates within 15-30% of actual owl population size (Fuller and Mosher 1981, Smith et al. 1987). Therefore, a substantial portion of the screech-owl population may have used the boxes during the course of the study.

Even though owl use ranged from 15-22% during this study, few boxes remained unused for long periods. Eastern Fox Squirrels occupied 54% of the boxes, and combined use by House Sparrows and European Starlings was 12%. Squirrel use was greatest during winter, while sparrows and starlings occupied boxes only during spring. Squirrels may have competed with screech-owls, even when natural cavities were abundant, and some boxes were used transiently by both squirrels and owls. Fowler and Dimmick (1983) indicated that Gray Squirrels did not affect owl use of boxes in spring. We found only one instance of harassment by squirrels, and most squirrels had vacated boxes by the start of the nesting season. Starlings and House Sparrows did not affect nest-box use by screech-owls in our study, although Fowler and Dimmick (1983) recorded some owl nest destruction by starlings.

**Habitat use**--We found that screech-owls used nest boxes most commonly in riparian sites, evidently preferring them to upland and farmstead woodlots (Figure 1). Furthermore, all nesting attempts occurred in riparian boxes, and most of the screech-owls located on roadside surveys of the township were found near streams (De Geus and Bowles 1990). Other studies also have indicated that screech-owls prefer streamside habitat (Ellison 1980, Smith and Gilbert 1984). Many of our riparian sites lacked natural cavities, but contained abundant foraging habitat. Such sites offer greater habitat variety and are less isolated than upland and farmstead woodlots, providing both foraging habitat and travel corridors. Lynch and Smith (1984) found that the degree of isolation and habitat variety were more important to screech-owls than woodland size, although some minimum size likely exists. Lower use of nest boxes placed in upland and farmstead habitats may reflect fewer visits by foraging

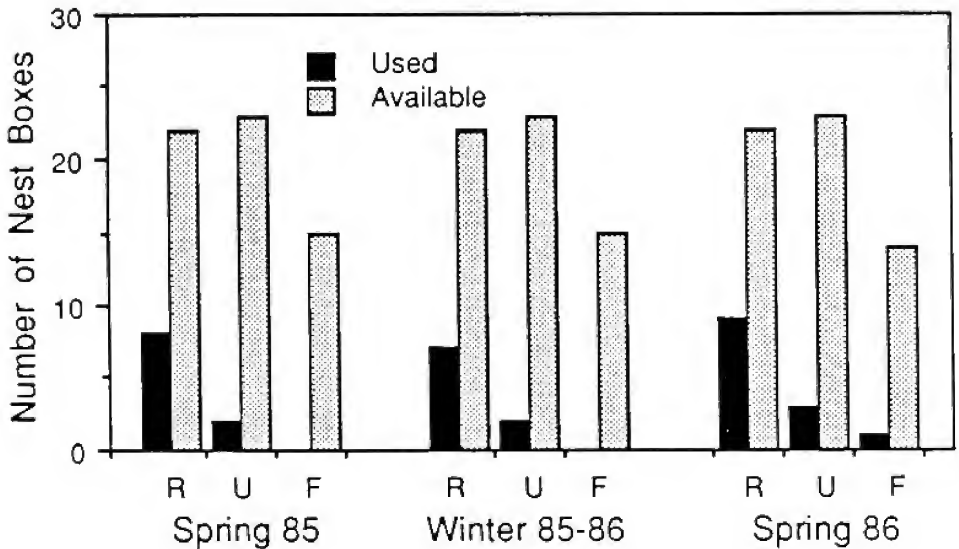


Figure 1. Proportion of nest boxes occupied by screech-owls among three woodland habitat types (R - riparian, U - upland, F - farmstead).

owls, perhaps because of greater distance from streams and woodlots and fewer interconnected lanes for travel. However, Ellison (1980) found that screech-owls generally avoid dry upland woods.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was funded by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Nongame Wildlife Program, with money derived from the Chickadee Checkoff for nongame wildlife. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Lake Red Rock also provided several nest boxes and access to federal lands. The authors thank D. Reeves, D. Roosa, C. J. Beukelman, J. Stravers, S. A. Gritters, and W. N. De Geus for their assistance and, especially, the many residents of Summit Township who allowed us to place nest boxes on their property. J. J. Dinsmore, L. B. Best, S. N. Wiemeyer, F. R. Gelbach, and C. D. Maru provided criticism of earlier drafts of this manuscript.

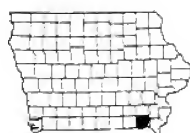
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# INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SHORT-EARED OWLS AND NORTHERN HARRIERS IN VAN BUREN COUNTY

JIM SINCLAIR



At 9 a.m. on 16 June 1990, Beth Brown, Ann Johnson, and I saw a Short-eared Owl hunting over a grassland adjacent to the Indian Creek Wildlife Area in Van Buren County in southeastern Iowa. The bird hunted steadily for 15 minutes, making numerous stoops before it caught a small mammal, probably a vole. The owl flew with its prey directly north toward the wildlife area, slowly gaining height to approximately 200 feet and then began a slow, sailing descent. When the owl was at about 50 ft in altitude, a female Northern Harrier rose from the grass directly below the owl. The harrier flew straight up, sparred briefly with the owl, and caused the owl to drop its prey. The harrier then flew to and landed at the spot where the prey item had fallen. The owl, which had not displayed any defensive behavior, resumed hunting. Five minutes later, two female or immature-plumaged harriers rose from the spot where the owl had dropped its prey and flew off in opposite directions.

Over the next hour the owl caught four more prey items, three of which it carried to the approximate spot where it had been forced to drop its earlier prey. Each time, it landed there, stayed on the ground for less than two minutes, and then resumed hunting. The fourth prey item was taken to a different location where the owl remained for at least 15 minutes, after which we left the area. Two harriers were observed intermittently during that same hour. Twice a female harrier carried a prey item to a location approximately 150 yards from the spot where the owl was delivering its prey. Because of the distance involved, we were only able to ascertain that the second harrier was not an adult male.

## DISCUSSION

Both the Short-eared Owl and Northern Harrier are amongst Iowa's rarest breeding birds. The loss of Iowa's prairies and marshes is probably the main factor that has reduced these formerly common Iowa nesters to mere remnant populations (Dinsmore et al. 1984). However, in recent years, with the advent of the Conservation Reserve Program, reports of nesting attempts of both species have increased (Dinsmore 1988).

The Short-eared Owl and Northern Harrier are sympatric over much of their breeding range. The owl occurs on 95 percent of the harrier's range and the harrier occurs on 65 percent of the owl's range (Clark and Ward 1974). Despite this broad overlap, competition between the two has not been widely reported. Several factors probably limit such competition. The Northern Harrier is significantly heavier than the Short-eared Owl with only marginal overlap between the largest female Short-eared Owls and the smallest male Northern Harriers. Although both species feed largely on small mammals, this size difference presumably allows the harrier to pursue larger prey, thereby reducing competition for food (Clark and Ward 1974). Another way that competition may be reduced is by nesting at different times. In the Upper Midwest, Short-eared Owls tend to commence nesting earlier than the Northern



Harrier (Bent 1937, 1938). A third factor that may limit interspecific competition between the two is that the Northern Harrier displays territorial fidelity over successive years (Hamerstrom 1969) while the Short-eared Owl does not (Clark 1975). The Short-eared Owl is described as a fugitive species that can take advantage of unusual environmental conditions and/or newly created habitat (Clark and Ward 1974). In this case, the unusual environmental condition may have been the abundance of voles in 1989 (Jim Sandrock, pers. communication) and the newly created habitat was the land enrolled in CRP.

A number of interesting questions arise from the incident described above. First, were either or both of the species nesting at this site. A nest search was conducted but neither an owl nor a harrier nest was found (Jim Sandrock, pers. communication). However, the fact that both species returned to approximately the same respective locations with prey items strongly suggests that either nests with young or recently fledged young were present. Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls have nested as close as 30 meters apart (Clark and Ward 1974) so it is possible that both species had a nest in the same general area.

Others have seen Northern Harriers stealing food from Short-eared Owls (Berger 1958, Hamerstrom 1986). In most of these interactions between the two species, the harrier was the aggressor (Hamerstrom 1986), probably because of its size advantage. There are no similar records of the owl's lack of any defensive behavior. Perhaps this owl had been pirated frequently enough that the event had become ritualized.

The absence of any male Northern Harriers among the birds I saw may help explain this event. Both harriers may have been adult females. Northern Harriers may nest in loose colonies so two females could have been in the same area. A more likely alternative is that one of the harriers was a recently-fledged young bird. Although Bent (1937) suggests somewhat later nesting for harriers, several recent records from southeastern Iowa suggest that it is possible that young harriers could have fledged by mid June (Carol Thompson, pers. communication). Harriers are known to be polygynous, especially when food is abundant (Hamerstrom 1986), providing another explanation for finding two females. A third alternative is possible. When voles are abundant, first-year male Northern Harriers, still in an immature-like plumage, may nest. This phenomena has been seen in Iowa (Kent and Vane 1957) and may have happened again in 1990. Whatever the explanation, this was an interesting phenomena involving two of Iowa's rarest nesting species.

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810 North B. Street, Indianola, IA 50125



*Northern Saw-whet Owl, 12 February 1989 near Saylorville Lake. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore*

# LOCATING NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

For many years, Northern Saw-whet Owls have been considered uncommon to rare winter residents in Iowa. Prior to 1985, an average of three or four Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported per year in *Iowa Bird Life*. Many of these owls frequented the same roosts year after year, such as those at Big Creek State Park, Ledges State Park, and Grammer Grove Wildlife Area.

In the winter of 1985-86, I did an extensive search of cedar groves in central Iowa and located 18 Northern Saw-whet Owls. I have located additional birds each year since then. Following are some tips I would offer to anyone trying to locate Northern Saw-whet Owls in Iowa.

In Iowa, Northern Saw-whet Owls are regular migrants and winter residents throughout the state. Early migrants arrive in October and most birds have departed by early April. I believe that wintering birds are most easily found between the end of November and early March, a time when most migrants have left the state.

Northern Saw-whet Owls are most likely to be found in small, isolated cedars or in groves of small cedars. Most of the roost sites I have found have had three additional features. First, the owls prefer to roost within four to eight feet above the ground. Second, most roost sites are located on south or east facing slopes. Presumably, this is because such sites are sheltered from the prevailing northwest winds at this time of year. Thirdly, every roost site I have found has been located near water, usually a small stream or a lake. Most roost sites were less than one hundred feet from water. Also, many roost sites are located near open, grassy areas which probably serve as hunting grounds for the owls. Also, keep in mind that Northern Saw-whet Owls will often return to the same roost site year after year. Hopefully, these tips will aid you in locating this elusive species in Iowa and elsewhere.

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames IA 50010



*Typical winter habitat for Northern Saw-whet Owls. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore.*

# FIELD REPORTS--SPRING 1990

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE



## WEATHER

In general, this spring could be described as wet and cool. The drought of the last two years seems to be over after above-normal precipitation during the period. Not since 1987 have Iowa's marshes had adequate water in them. There were numerous flooded fields during May as a result of the precipitation, producing an above-average shorebird migration.

March was fairly warm, especially during the first half of the month. The warm weather caused many bodies of water to thaw by the 10th. March was also wet with a statewide average of 4.2 inches of precipitation, tying 1951 as the wettest March on record. Most of the precipitation fell as rain, but parts of western Iowa received as much as 9 inches of snow on 14-15 March. Parts of central, southeastern, and east-central Iowa were hit by 14 tornadoes on the 13th, earlier than normal. The severe ice storm on 7 March in central Iowa damaged thousands of trees.

April had an average of 2.2 inches of precipitation, slightly less than normal. By the end of the month, precipitation for the year was above average for the eastern two thirds of Iowa and 90% of normal for the rest of the state. Temperatures averaged about normal for the month, but there were some extremes; highs in the 80's on four dates, but a chilly 10 in Spencer on the 7th and 28 in Mason City on the 30th.

May was generally cool, starting with lows of 28 in Atlantic, Spencer, and Sioux City on the first. By the end of the month, all major weather reporting stations except Dubuque and Sioux City were reporting above-average precipitation for the year. Major weather fronts on 8-10 May and 18-19 May produced spectacular fallouts of migrants. Heavy rains were associated with these fronts, such as 5 inches at Boone on the 8th and 5 inches at Sioux City on the 18th.

## GENERAL TRENDS

The 1990 spring migration began on an early note with many waterfowl passing through the state during the first half of March. Cooler weather during late March slowed things down. Shorebirds, usually evident by late March, were not present in any numbers until late April. Many contributors commented that the passerine migration was late, but there were a number of early records during the warm period from 24-29 April. The period 9-12 May brought the first influx of migrant passerines, including record numbers of thrushes and many warblers. For example, Bob Myers had 29 species of warblers in central Iowa on 14 May. A second push of warblers occurred on 18-19 May while many birders were at the Tri-State Convention in LaCrosse. Many reporters noted that this was the best push of migrant warblers they had ever seen, especially in central Iowa. Shorebirds had a strong flight on 20-21 May, at least through central Iowa.

## UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

There were a number of good birds reported this spring, although the spring was about average in terms of rarities. Reports of Glossy Ibis, Smew, and Iceland Gull would be firsts for the state if accepted by the Records Committee. Other accidentals, pending acceptance by the Records Committee, included Snowy Plover, Black-headed

Grosbeak, and Green-tailed Towhee. Casual species reported were Red-necked Grebe, White-faced Ibis, Surf Scoter, Ferruginous Hawk, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Townsend's Solitaire, and Great-tailed Grackle. At least three of these (Red-necked Grebe, Surf Scoter, and Great-tailed Grackle) deserve regular status. Some of the more unusual regular species reported were Western Grebe, White-winged Scoter, Prairie Falcon, Prairie Warbler, Lark Bunting, Henslow's Sparrow, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

## SPECIES DATA

\* = documented; [] = record dates.

**Common Loon:** Peak was 26 on 13 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD); last were singles on 27 May at Mason City (JLW) and Lylah's M. (MJH).

**Horned Grebe:** Few reports. The first were early singles on 10 Mar at Rathbun Res. (RLC) and 11 Mar at Saylorville Res. (AJ). Peak was 4 on 25 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD). 2 on 23 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD, JJD) were late.

**Red-necked Grebe:** The only report was 1 on 11 Mar at Maffitt Res., Polk Co. (\*AJ).

**Eared Grebe:** A banner spring for this species. The first 1 on 22 Mar at L. Manawa (AJ) was a little early. Peaks were 13 on 21 May at Little Wall L. (SJD) and 21 on 22 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD). E Iowa reports included 3 on 19 Apr at L. Macbride (THK) and 2 on 22-23 May at Cardinal M. (DC).

**Western Grebe:** An excellent spring for this species as well. Reports included 1 on 20 Apr at Saylorville Res. (RKM), 1 on 27 Apr-1 May at Pony Creek L. (DLR, RR, BJR), 1 on 1 May at Coralville Res. (THK), 1 at Mud L., Clay Co. on 8-9 May (D. Ewing fide JJD), 1 on 11 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD, ASF), 2 on 11 May at Elm L. (SJD, ASF), 3 on 21 May at Little Wall L. (SJD), 2 on 21 May at Spirit L. (SJD), and 3 on 22 May at South Twin L. (SJD).

**American White Pelican:** The first were 275 on 20 Mar at Red Rock Res. (AJ). Peak was 2,500 on 16-17 Apr at L. Manawa (BP). In E Iowa, there were up to 8 at Coralville Res. through 11 May (THK), 35 on 21 Mar at Indian Lake P., Van Buren Co. (fide RIC), 45 on 6 Apr at Pool 19, Lee Co. (RIC), and 37 on 14 Apr at Lylah's M. (MJH).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Peaks were 1,400 on 12 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 850 on 5 May at Coralville Res. (THK). There were numerous late May reports, including 80 on 27 May flying north over Ames (JJD). At least 200 nests were at Pool 13, Clinton Co. on 8 May (PCP). This species is a rare breeder in Iowa.

**American Bittern:** 1-4 were reported from Clay, Guthrie, Kossuth, Winnebago, and Wright counties.

**Great Blue Heron:** First report was 1 on 3 Mar near Story City (M. Meetz fide SJD). On 7 Mar, 1 was on a nest at Davenport (PCP), an unusually early date for nesting. On 21 May, there were 8 nests at West Swan L. (SJD). The historic heronry at Red Rock Res. was active this year, the first nesting since 1972 (fide AJ, Gladys Black). The 81 counted at Coralville Res. on 18 May (THK) were suspected to be from a nearby colony.

**Great Egret:** Peaks were 30 on 9 May at Coralville Res. (THK) and 84 on 18 May in Clayton and Allamakee counties (SJD, JJD, HZ).

**Snowy Egret:** The only report was 1 on 27 Apr at Keg L. (SJD, details).

**Little Blue Heron:** 1 ad. on 25 Apr at the IPS Ponds (BFH, JP) and 2 ad. on 9 May w. of Perry (RKM) were the only reports.

**Cattle Egret:** Peak was 14 on 24 May in Greene Co. (EIA, EuA). 1-5 were reported from Allamakee, Boone, Fremont, Greene, Guthrie, Jasper, Johnson, Marion, Mills, Polk, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties.

**Green-backed Heron:** 1 on 22 Apr at Riverton W.A. (MPr, BPr) was early.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Peaks were 37 on 11 May at Hottes L. (DCH) and 16 on 11 May at Big Wall L. (SJD, ASF), both at locations where they could be nesting.

**White-faced Ibis:** More reports than usual this spring. 2 on 23-24 Apr at Cone M. (\*JLF, \*CJB) caused confusion among birders; thus the report that one of these birds was a Glossy Ibis (see below). Most likely, the bird in question was in fact a year-old White-faced Ibis which was not in breeding plumage. Other reports were 2 on 28 Apr at Jemmeson Sl. (Larry Igl fide SJD), 1 on 28 Apr at the IPS Ponds s. of Sioux City (\*BFH), and 1 on 29 Apr at Bays Branch (SJD, ASF, m ob.) which was joined by a second bird on 5-6 May.

**Glossy Ibis:** A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Tundra Swan:** Few reports. 2 ad. on 17 Mar near Hamburg (E. Klaas fide SJD), 2 ad. and 3 imm. on 24-25 Mar at Coralville Res. (THK), 1 on 24 Mar s. of Riceville (MJH), 1 imm. on 1-3 Apr in SW Greene Co. (SJD, JJD), 2 on 3 Apr at Sunken Grove L. (MMB), and 2 on 18 Apr at Grover L. (DCH) were the only reports.

**Mute Swan:** 2 ad. on 8 May at Sabula (PCP) and 1 ad. on 22 May at Little Storm L. (SJD) were likely escapees.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** There was a good migration statewide, with peaks of 650 on 23 Mar in Fremont Co. (SJD), 425 on 24 Mar in Polk Co. (SJD, LPH), 1,000 on 25 Mar at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK), and 350 on 7 Apr at Snyder Bend (BFH). In E Iowa, 50 on 25 Mar at Coralville Res. (THK) was high for that area. Many were still present well into May, with late reports of 1 on 23 May at Lakin Sl. (SJD, JJD) and 1 on 28 May at the IPS Ponds (BFH).

**Snow Goose:** Peak was 28,000 on 23 Mar in Fremont Co. (SJD). The scattered late May reports included 21 on 24 May at Riverton W.A. (SJD) and 1 on 31 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). A possible hybrid blue X white phase Snow Goose was described on 4 Mar at Coralville Res. (\*RPI).

**Ross' Goose:** Numbers continue to increase, possibly due to an increasing population or a migration shift eastward. An estimated 2,000-3,000 on 16-18 Mar in Fremont Co. (E. Klaas fide SJD) and 745 on 23 Mar in Fremont Co. (SJD) are by far the largest numbers ever reported in Iowa. Late were 1 on 20 Apr at Dan Green Sl. (MMB, details), 1 on 26 Apr at IPS Ponds (BFH, details) and 1 on 27-28 Apr at Riverton W.A. (SJD details, DLR). There were scattered reports during March and April in C Iowa with a peak of 14 on 24 Mar in N Polk Co. (SJD). Further east, 1 on 2,4 Mar at Coralville Res. (\*THK, \*JLF, RPI, details) and 2 on 11-15 Mar at Cone M. (\*THK, \*JLF) appear to be firsts for those counties.

**Canada Goose:** Peak was 1,300 on 2 Mar at Red Rock Res. (SJD).

**Green-winged Teal:** 300 on 31 Mar at Coralville Res. (THK) was a big concentration.

**Northern Pintail:** Peak was 700 on 5 Mar at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Cinnamon Teal:** Six reports were more than normal. These included 2 males on 23 Mar at Riverton W.A. (SJD)(3rd earliest), 2 on 15 Apr near Cherokee (MMB, DBI), 1 male on 16-19 Apr near the IPL Ponds (DLR, m.ob.), a pair on 26,28 Apr NW of Randolph (DLR, RR, BJR), 1 male on 30 Apr-2 May at Credit Island(PCP,m.ob.), and 1 male on 12 May near St. Anthony(C. Kurtz fide HZ). A hybrid Cinnamon X Blue-winged Teal was photographed on 21 Apr at Spirit L. (G. Amdahl fide DCH).

**Canvasback:** Peaks were 410 on 4 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 250 on 22 Mar at Trumbull L. (MMB).

**Greater Scaup:** Several reports, most with details. Peaks were 15 on 4 Mar at Red Rock Res. (SJD) and 15 on 8 Mar at Liscomb (MPR). The last was 1 female on 24 May at Riverton W.A. (SJD, details).

**Lesser Scaup:** Peak was 3,500 on 30 Mar in flooded fields in N Polk Co. (SJD).

**Oldsquaw:** 1 on 22 Mar at IPL Ponds (AJ), 1 female on 14 Apr at Plymouth (CN), 1 male on 27 Apr at New L. (SJD, details), and 1 female on 4, 11 May at Rice L. (SJD, details)[record latest] were all the reports.

**Surf Scoter:** 1 male on 15-18 Apr at Badger Creek L. (EIA, EuA, m.ob.) and 1 female or imm. on 4, 11 May at Ventura M. (SJD, details) were the only reports.

**White-winged Scoter:** 1 on 17-19 Apr near Badger Creek L. (EIA, EuA), up to 9 on 19 Apr at L. Manawa (BPa, J. Kovanda fide BPa), and 1 imm. male on 3-4 May at Little Wall L. (SJD, GBr) were the only reports.

**Common Goldeneye:** 1-2 females on 22-30 May at Cardinal M. (DC) and 1 male on 31 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK)[2nd latest] were late.

**Bufflehead:** Last was 1 female on 22 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD)[ties record latest].

**Smew:** A male on 22 Apr at Davenport (\*BBI) was likely an escapee, although its origin will remain uncertain. I will let the Records Committee decide the fate of this one.

**Hooded Merganser:** Peak was 27 on 30 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD). At least 5 broods hatched at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

**Common Merganser:** A pair on 24 May at IPL Ponds( SJD) was late.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** A very good migration in late March was indicated by peaks of 590 on 30 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 200 on 31 Mar at Coralville Res. (THK). The last was 1 female on 28 May at Charles City (MAP).

**Ruddy Duck:** 123 on 21 May at Rice L. (SJD) was late for such a large number. A report of 4 pairs on 30 May at Cardinal M. (DC) could indicate breeding birds, unusual away from the northwest part of the state.

**Turkey Vulture:** The first was 1 on 11 Mar at Jester Park (AJ), but by 18 Mar there were 100 in Lee Co. (B. Warson fide SJD).

**Mississippi Kite:** After last summer's report, there were two reports this spring; 1 on 13 May at Ledges S.P. (\*JSi) and 1 subad. on 18 May at Coralville Res. (\*THK). Both will be evaluated by the Records Committee.

**Bald Eagle:** Peaks were 38 (25a, 13i) on 2 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 84 (55a, 29i) on 4 Mar at Red Rock Res. (SJD). Late adults were 1 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (THK) and 1 on 21 May at Elm L. (SJD).

**Northern Harrier:** A nest was found on 4 May in Hamilton Co.(SJD). May reports from Appanoose, Greene, Tama, Winnebago, and Worth counties could indicate nesting in those areas as well.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Peak was 6 on 22 Apr at Sioux Center(JV).

**Cooper's Hawk:** Nests were reported from Woodland Mounds Preserve, Warren Co. JSi) and s. of Moulton (D. Blumer fide JJD).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Singles reported from Allamakee, Boone, Hardin, Johnson, and Polk counties.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** Scattered reports in late April and May, but the only large number was 22 on 23 Apr in Howard Co. (MJH).

**Swainson's Hawk:** Numerous reports of 1 or 2 birds from Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Kossuth, Lyon, Madison, Monona, Pottawattamie, and Sioux counties.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** Several Krider's and Harlan's forms were reported. A Harlan's on 29 Mar near Rock Valley (DCH), a Harlan's on 31 Mar in Keokuk Co. (RIC, AJ), and a Krider's on 26 May in w Sioux Co. (JV) were all well described.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** 1 on 5 May in NE Boone Co. (MPr, details) was late.

**Ferruginous Hawk:** A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Golden Eagle:** The only report was of a late immature on 30 Apr in NW Jasper Co. (\*BPr)[ties record latest].

**American Kestrel:** Peak was 23 on 23 Mar in Hardin and Marshall counties (MPr).

**Merlin:** Reports with details were 1 on 10 Mar at Sioux Center (JV), 1 on 3 Apr w. of Plymouth (CN), and 1 on 15 Apr at Ames (SJD).

**Peregrine Falcon:** Singles were reported, with details, on 5 May w. of Percival (DLR, TB, WRS), 5 May in n. Polk Co. (PA, RA), 18 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (fide MCK), and 26 May at Coralville Res. (THK)[record latest]. Could the latter bird be a Cedar Rapids native returning home late? A report from early April, without details, was deleted. Reports of this species outside of the normal migration interval(late Apr-mid-May) should be detailed.

**Prairie Falcon:** 1 on 4 Apr at the Marshalltown Hy-Vee (\*BPr) was the only report.

**Gray Partridge:** This species continues to expand southward, with reports from Decatur (JDG) and Mills (DLR) counties.

**Virginia Rail:** 3 on 22 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD) was the peak.

**Sora:** 1 on 31 Mar at Cone M. (AJ, details)[record earliest] was the first. Several nests were found in NW Cerro Gordo Co. (P. Delpey fide JJD).

**Common Moorhen:** 1 on 11 May and 7 on 21 May at Big Wall L. (SJD) were the first and peak.

**American Coot:** Peak was 1,000 on 7 Apr at Snyder Bend (BFH). An estimated 700-800 on 22-23 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD, JJD) included many nesting birds.

**Sandhill Crane:** Several reports, including 9 ad. on 10 Mar s. of Ogden (GBr fide SJD), 1 on 7 Apr at Coralville Res. (THK), 1 imm. on 5 May at Zirbel Sl. (JLW, EEP), 1 ad. on 8, 12 May in Warren Co. (\*SJS, AJ), up to 2 at Green Island during April and May (fide JJD), and 1 near Knoxville in May (fide Gladys Black). Observers are encouraged to report the age of all cranes in Iowa.

**Black-bellied Plover:** 2 on 30 Apr at Coralville Res. (THK, RPi) were early. Peak was 8 on 20 May in Guthrie Co. (PA, RA).

**Lesser Golden-Plover:** The first were 10 on 24 Mar s. of Slater (SJD). Peak was 1,170 on 4 May at Big Wall L. (SJD). Good flights occurred during late April, on 3-4 May, and again on 20-21 May this spring.

**Semipalmated Plover:** Peak was 65 on 9 May at Coralville Res. (THK).

**Snowy Plover:** A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Piping Plover:** Many reports from the western half of the state. In W Iowa, the first was 1 early individual on 11 Apr at L. Manawa (BPp)[ties record earliest]. Up to 2 were at the IPL Ponds after 19 Apr EIA, EuA, m.ob.) with 1 nest there on 24 May (SJD). At the IPS Ponds near Sioux City, up to 4 birds were present after 26 Apr (BFH). Others were 1 on 13, 28 Apr at Folsom L. (DLR, RR), 1 with a band on one leg on 27 Apr at Oakland (SJD), and 1 on 5 May s. of Randolph (DLR). In C. Iowa, there was 1 on 19-20 Apr at Big Creek S.P. (SJD, EIA, EuA) and 1 on 29 Apr at Bays Branch (RKM). At Saylorville Res., the first showed up on 5 May (MPr) and a peak of 4 were there on 10 May (SJD). There was some evidence of nesting



- attempts, but the birds were gone by 18 May. A banded bird was at Saylorville Res. on 15 May (SJD).
- American Avocet:** This species staged one of its strongest flights ever through Iowa, especially in late April. Peak numbers were 19 on 20-28 Apr at Saylorville Res. (BE, m.ob.), 21 on 22 Apr at Riverton W.A. (MPR, BPR), and 20 on 6 May at the IPS Ponds (BFH, JPR). The last was 1 on 27-28 May at Swan L., Johnson Co. (THK).
- Greater Yellowlegs:** The first were 2 on 18 Mar in n. Polk Co. (SJD). 1 on 28 May at Coralville Res. (THK, details) was late.
- Lesser Yellowlegs:** 1 on 18 Mar in n. Polk Co. (SJD) was early. Peak was 170 on 1 May at Colo Ponds (HZ).
- Willet:** This species also staged a good flight through Iowa this spring. Peaks were 18 on 26 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 37 on 29 Apr at Bays Branch (SJD, ASF). Many others were reported in late April and early May.
- Upland Sandpiper:** Reported from Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Greene, Hamilton, Johnson, Kossuth, Polk, Story, Van Buren, and Wright counties with peaks of 5 on 12 May at Colo Ponds (MPR, BPR) and on 24 May in Cerro Gordo Co. (CN).
- Hudsonian Godwit:** Few reports. Peaks were 23 on 14 May at Colo Ponds (HZ) and 46 on 24 May at IPL Ponds (SJD).
- Marbled Godwit:** Reports with details were 2 on 13 Apr in n. Polk Co. (SJD), 1 on 18 Apr at Bays Branch (RKM), 1 on 28 Apr at Riverton W.A. (RKM), 1 on 30 Apr at Big Creek (AJ), and 1 on 30 Apr at Saylorville Res. (AJ).
- Ruddy Turnstone:** Numerous reports after mid-May. 1 on 10-11 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD) was early. Other reports were 3 on 13 May at Saylorville Res. (MPR, BPR), 1 on 13, 18 May at the IPS Ponds (BFH), 2 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (THK), 3 on 20 May near Perry (RKM), 1 on 20 May in West Des Moines (PA, RA), 1 on 20 May at Long Pond (PA, RA), 3 on 21 May at Rice L. (SJD), 6 on 21 May at Spirit L. (SJD), 1 on 21 May near St. Anthony (C. Kurtz fide HZ), and 1 on 22 May w. of Dunbar Sl. (SJD).
- Sanderling:** 1 on 19 Apr and 8 on 11 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD) were the first and peak.
- Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Peaks were 75 on 9 May at Coralville Res. (THK) and 220 on 11 May at Rice L. (SJD).
- Least Sandpiper:** Peak was 150 on 9 May at Coralville Res. (THK).
- Baird's Sandpiper:** The first was 1 on 15 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and the peak was 84 on 4 May at East Twin L. (SJD).
- White-rumped Sandpiper:** 4 on 27 Apr at Oakland (SJD, details)[3rd earliest] were the first. Peak was 102 on 22 May in Greene Co. (SJD).
- Pectoral Sandpiper:** The first were 2 on 4 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD)[2nd earliest]. Peak was 306 on 1 May at Colo Ponds (HZ).
- Dunlin:** The first were 6 on 16 Apr at Mud L., Clay Co. (D. Ewing fide SJD). Peaks were 22 on 16 May at Colo Ponds (HZ) and 33 on 22 May in Greene Co. (SJD).
- Stilt Sandpiper:** The first was 1 on 27 Apr at Oakland (SJD). Peaks were 20 on 6 May at the IPS Ponds (BFH) and 23 on 20 May in NW Warren Co. (SJS).
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** The only report was 22 on 19 May at Riverton W.A. (DLR, RR)[ties 2nd latest].
- Short-billed Dowitcher:** Peaks were 31 on 11 May at East Twin L. (SJD), 30 on 14 May at Coralville Res. (THK), and 47 on 12 May at Colo Ponds (MPR, BPR). Most reports provided details.
- Long-billed Dowitcher:** Peaks were 50 on 27 Apr in Fremont Co. (SJD) and 20 on 30 Apr at Swan L., Johnson Co. (THK). The last was 1 on 14 May at Coralville Res. (THK)[2nd latest]. Again, most reports included details.
- Common Snipe:** Peak was 75 on 13 Apr at Runnells W.A. (JSi).
- Wilson's Phalarope:** Scattered reports of up to 7 birds statewide, except for 24 on 1 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). 2 pairs on 21 May at Dan Green Sl. (SJD) and 2 more pairs on 22 May in SW Greene Co. (SJD) could be nesting birds.
- Red-necked Phalarope:** The first was 1 on 11 May at Radcliffe (MPR). This species staged a spectacular flight on 21-22 May with 13 at Little Wall L. (SJD), 3 at Big Wall L. (SJD), 34 at Ventura M. (SJD), 54 at Spirit L. (SJD), 3 at Dan Green Sl. (SJD) (all on 21 May), and 27 on 22 May at South Twin L. (SJD).
- Franklin's Gull:** A late report was of 1 on 11 Feb at Saylorville Res. (EIA, EuA), probably the same individual reported there since January. Peak numbers were 1,000 on 29 Apr in Pottawattamie Co. (BPa), 355 on 20 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 440 on 21 May in Dickinson Co. (SJD). In E Iowa, where the species is much less common, 1 was at Coralville Res. on 21, 24 Mar (THK) and 10 were at Davenport on 21-22 May (PCP).



**Bonaparte's Gull:** Several early records this spring including 1 on 10 Mar at Red Rock Res. (SJS)[ties record earliest], 1 on 13 Mar at L. Manawa (BPa)[3rd earliest], and 8 on 18 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD). Peak was 220 on 19 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD), and the last were 2 imm. there on 24 May (SJD).

**Ring-billed Gull:** An estimated 25,000 were at Saylorville Res. during mid-March (BE,SJD) with 140 still there on 20 May (SJD). Also, there were 1,000 on 17 Mar at Coralville Res. (THK).

**Herring Gull:** Late were two 2nd-year birds on 21 May at Clear L. (SJD) and 2 more 2nd-year birds on 24 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

**Iceland Gull:** A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Glaucous Gull:** Reports included 1 3rd-winter bird on 4 Mar at Red Rock Res. (SJD,details), 1 ad. on 9 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD,details), and 1 (age?) on 11 Mar at Saylorville Res. (AJ). It would help if reports of this species included the age of the bird.

**Caspian Tern:** The first was 1 on 19 Apr at Badger Creek L. (PA, RA, EIA, EuA)[ties record earliest]. Peak was 156 on 20 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

**Common Tern:** First were 5 on 27 Apr at IPL Ponds (SJD). Peak was 19 on 24 May below Saylorville Dam (SJD). Most reports included details.

**Forster's Tern:** The first were 2 on 13 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 1 on 13 Apr at Pacific Junction, Mills Co. (BPa, LPa). Peak was 186 on 10 May at Saylorville Res. (SJD). At least 5 nests were at Hottes L. on 21 May (SJD).

**Least Tern:** Reports included a pair on 18 May at Hawarden (JV; nesting?), 4 on 24 May at IPL Ponds (SJD), and 1 on 24 May at Riverton W.A. (SJD).

**Black Tern:** The first were 3 on 3 May at Little Wall L. (SJD). Peaks were 250 on 18 May in Clayton Co. (SJD, JJD, HZ) and 250 on 20 May near Granger (PA, RA).

**Ringed Turtle-Dove:** One was reported on 8-9 May at Indianola (AJ), undoubtedly an escapee from nearby.

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** 1 on 8 May at Iowa City (JLF) was early.

**Long-eared Owl:** The only report was 5 on 2 Mar at Big Creek S.P. (SJD, BE).

**Short-eared Owl:** 1 or 2 on 15 May in Van Buren Co. (JLF) may represent nesting birds.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** The only report was 1 on 4 Mar at Jester P. (PA,RA).

**Common Nighthawk:** The first were 4 on 27 Apr at Keokuk (B. Warson fide SJD).

**Whip-poor-will:** The first and most were 4 on 24 Apr in Fremont Co. (DLR, RR).

**Chuck-will's-widow:** The only reports were 1 on 5 May n. of Waubonsie S.P. (DLR) and 1 or 2 on 7, 9 May at Big Sand Mound Preserve (PCP).

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** 1 on 4 May at Sioux Center(JV) was a little early.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Reports of interest included 1 on 21 May at Sioux Center (JV), a possible nester, and a pair on 12 May at Effigy Mounds N.M. seen entering a nest hole (DC).

**Pileated Woodpecker:** Reports away from E Iowa were 1 on 22 May at Grammer Grove (BPr, RS) and at least 1 all spring along the Des Moines R. in Kossuth Co. (fide MCK). The latter report was thought to represent a breeding pair somewhere in the area.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Peak was 6 on 21 May in Dickinson Co. (SJD) and on 26 May in S Kossuth Co. (MCK).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** The first was 1 on 26 Apr in N Warren Co. (AJ, details)[record earliest].

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Many reports of 1-5, beginning with 1 on 12 May at Walnut Woods S.P. (AJ, details).

**Alder Flycatcher:** 7 reports of 1-4 birds, all after 20 May.

**Least Flycatcher:** The first were 3 on 28 Apr at Waubonsie S.P.(DLR), although an *Empidonax* sp. on 24 Apr in Warren Co. (AJ) was probably this species. Peak was 12 on 10 May in Warren Co. (AJ).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** 1 on 15 May in Van Buren Co. (\*JLF) was the only report.

**Eastern Phoebe:** The first was 1 on 18 Mar at Croton Unit, Shimek S.F. (B. Warson fide SJD)[ties 2nd earliest].

**Great-crested Flycatcher:** This species arrived early this year, with several reports from late April, beginning with 1 on 25 Apr in Warren Co. (AJ)[3rd earliest].

**Western Kingbird:** Away from W Iowa, singles were reported on 11 May e. of Steamboat Rock (\*MPR), 14 May at Holst S.F. (RKM, EIA, EuA), and on 20, 22 May in Boone Co. (SRL).

**Eastern Kingbird:** The first was an early individual on 21 Apr near Norwalk (AJ)[ties 2nd earliest].

**Horned Lark:** Adults feeding 4 young on 19 Apr at Coralville Res.(DCP) were unusually early nesters.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** A spectacular flight in May was evidenced by over 20 reports during that time. The last were singles on 23 May at Lime Creek Nature Center, Cerro Gordo Co. (JLW), 26 May near Minburn (RKM)[3rd latest], and 29 May in Poweshiek Co. (DK)[2nd latest].

**Brown Creeper:** The usual May reports included a pair on 8, 12 May at Credit Island (PCP) and 4 males on 22 May at Huron Island (PCP). These birds were territorial and are probably nesting.

**Carolina Wren:** 1-4 reported from Allamakee, Boone, Cass, Fremont, Howard, and Johnson counties. A failed nest was at Effigy Mounds N.M. (fide DC).

**Sedge Wren:** 1 on 20 Apr at the Polk City W.A. (BE)[record earliest] was quite early.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** 1 on 27 May at Mason City(JLW)[ties 2nd latest] was the last.

**Townsend's Solitaire:** 1 on 7 Apr at Brown's L. (BFH,details) was probably one of the birds that wintered there.

**Veery:** The peak was 20 on 11 May at Waterworks P. in Des Moines (JSi).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** Excellent numbers during mid-May. Peak was 10 on 11 May at Ledges S.P. (SJD, ASF) and at Waterworks P. in Des Moines (JSi).

**Swainson's Thrush:** The period from 9-12 May witnessed probably the best fallout of thrushes ever reported in Iowa. Reports such as "excellent migration" and "birds everywhere" were common. As expected, Swainson's was the most common. Peak number was 200+ on 11 May at Ledges S.P. (SJD, ASF). Many were still present in late May with the last 1 on 31 May at Sioux Center (JV).

**Wood Thrush:** The first was 1 on 26 Apr at Waubonsie S.P. (BP a).

**Gray Catbird:** The first was 1 on 25 Apr in Clive (JC).

**Northern Mockingbird:** Many reports this spring. Much less common in the northern half of the state, singles were in Boone Co. on 19 Apr (SRL), s. of Sioux Center on 5 May (JV), and e. of Union Grove S.P. on 21 May (MP r).

**American Pipit:** Few reports. The first was 1 on 2 Mar at Saylorville Res. (SJD, details, BE)[record earliest]. Peak was 25 on 14 Mar near Slater (MP r, BPr). The last was 1 on 4 May at Morse L. (SJD).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Nesting was reported in Madison, Sioux, and Story counties.

**White-eyed Vireo:** Numerous reports this spring, beginning with 1 on 28 Apr at Amana Woods (RP i). Up to 3 were at Hickory Hill P. after 30 Apr (JLF, m.ob.). Others were reported from Boone, Lee, Louisa, Van Buren, and Wapello counties.

**Bell's Vireo:** The first and peak were 4 on 15 May at Forney L. (DLR, RR).

**Solitary Vireo:** Many reports in May with the last 1 on 26 May at Ames (PWM).

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** The first were 2 on 28 Apr at Manti Woods, Fremont Co. (DLR, RR, BJR).

**Warbling Vireo:** The first was 1 on 25 Apr at Ames (JJD)[3rd earliest].

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Many reports in mid-May, beginning with 1 on 7 May at Bacon Creek P., Woodbury Co. (BFH).

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Peak was 7 on 18 May in Allamakee Co. (HZ, JJD, SJD). A pair on 15 May at Stone S.P. (BFH) is noteworthy since this species is not known to breed in that part of the state. 2 on 23 May at Lime Creek Nature Center (JLW) were unusual in NC Iowa.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** The peak was 5 on 9 May at Grammer Grove (MP r, BPr).

**Tennessee Warbler:** The first were 4 on 24 Apr at Stone S.P. (SM). Peak was 8 on 19 May in Des Moines (MKT). Last was 1 on 31 May at Perry (RKM).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** The peak was 7 on 2 May in Warren Co. (AJ).

**Nashville Warbler:** The peak was 6 on 20 May at Lamb's Grove (GJB).

**Yellow Warbler:** The first was 1 on 24 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD)[ties record earliest]. There were many other reports from late April, indicating an unusually early migration this spring.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** Peaks were 10 on 14 May at Ledges S.P. and on 21 May in Dallas Co. (RKM). There were many reports of this species, indicating a strong flight.

**Magnolia Warbler:** The last was 1 on 30 May at Dawson (RKM).

**Cape May Warbler:** 1 on 12 May at Walnut Woods S.P. (AJ), 1 on 13 May in Des Moines (RIC), 2 on 14 May at Ledges S.P. (RKM), 1 on 20 May at Backbone S.P. (CJB, JLF), 2 on 21 May at Jester Park (RKM), and 1 on 22 May near Burt (R. Schmidt fide MCK) were more reports than normal for spring.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** The only report was 1 male on 11 May at Ledges S.P. (SJD, ASF). A "probable" report was not accepted since the observer expressed some doubts about the identification.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** The first were singles on 8 Apr at Fairfield (DCP) and in Van Buren Co. (RLC). Peak was 51 on 21 May at West Swan L. (SJD), a late date for such a large number. The last was 1 on 28 May at Walnut Woods S.P. (RKM).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** The peak was 4 on 6 May at Goose L., Kossuth Co. (MCK).

**Blackburnian Warbler:** The first was 1 on 2 May at Grammer Grove (MPR, BPr). Peak was 8 on 20 May at Pikes Peak S.P. (SJD). The last was 1 on 31 May at Perry (RKM).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** The first was 1 on 22 Apr at Ledges S.P. (SJD, ASF). 1 on 28 May at Walnut Woods S.P. (RKM) and 1 on 29 May at Pine Lake S.P. (MPR) were at locations where this species is more unusual.

**Pine Warbler:** The only report with good details was 1 on 16 May at Grammer Grove (\*MPR, BPr).

**Prairie Warbler:** A male on 23-29 May at Hickory Hill P. (\*JLF, m.ob.) was the only report of this species. This is about the 10th state record.

**Palm Warbler:** Numerous reports with a peak of 9 on 10 May at Union Grove S.P. (MPR).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** 1 was a bit early on 29 Apr at Brenton Sl. (JSi)[3rd earliest]. The peak was 9 on 20 May at Pikes Peak S.P. (SJD).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** The peak was 14 on 13 May at Ames (PWM).

**American Redstart:** Many reporters indicated that this was one of the commoner warblers this spring. Peaks were on 20 May with 50 at Hickory Hill P. (RPI) and 25 at Lamb's Grove (GJB).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** Many reports, beginning with 2 on 5 May at Brenton Sl. (RKM) and 1 on 5 May at Dudgeon L. (BPr). Peak was 6 on 20 May in Allamakee Co. (MPR, SJD, m.ob.). Other noteworthy reports were 1 on 21 May at Big Wall L. (SJD), 1 or 2 on 24, 26 May at Riverton W.A. (SJD, DLR), and 1 on 30 May near Algona (MCK) said to have been present since mid-May.

**Worm-eating Warbler:** Reports were 1 on 10 May at Ames (L. Hemesath fide JJD), 1 on 11 May at Holst S.F. (ASF, SJD), 1 on 13 May at Ledges S.P. (JSi, MPR, BPr), and 1 on 20 May in Van Buren Co. (RLC).

**Ovenbird:** 1 on 22 Apr at Woodland Mounds Preserve (JSi) was early. Peak was 15 on 13 May at Ames (PWM).

**Northern Waterthrush:** Peak was 12 on 13 May at Ames (PWM).

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** The first was 1 on 6 Apr at Croton Unit, Shimek S.F. (RIC). 1 on 16 May at Stone S.P. (BFH) was away from this species' usual range in Iowa.

**Kentucky Warbler:** 1 on 28 Apr at Waubonsie S.P. (DLR, RR, BJR) was early.

**Connecticut Warbler:** A banner spring for this species. Reports included 1 on 13 May at Brenton Sl. (RKM), 1 on 17 May (BPr) and 26 May (MPR, m.ob.) at Grammer Grove, 1 on 20 May at Lamb's Grove (GJB), 1 on 20 May at Backbone S.P. (CJB, JLF), 1 on 21 May at Jester Park (RKM), up to 2 on 22-28 May at Hickory Hill P. (THK, m.ob.), 1 on 27 May in Dallas Co. (RKM), and 1 on 28 May n. of Iowa City (JLF).

**Mourning Warbler:** 1 on 9 May and 6 on 22 May at Grammer Grove (MPR, BPr) were the first and most.

**Common Yellowthroat:** Many early reports this spring, beginning with 1 on 24 Apr in West Des Moines (PA, RA).

**Hooded Warbler:** Reports included 1 on 14, 26 May at Ledges S.P. (RKM, DLR, RR) and 1 on 14, 15, 28 May at Croton Unit, Shimek S.F. (JLF, PA, RA).

**Wilson's Warbler:** 1 on 28 Apr at Amana Woods (RPI)[record earliest] was early. The peak was 30 on 15 May in N Kossuth Co. (MCK). The last was 1 on 28 May at L. Macbride (THK).

**Canada Warbler:** The peak was 5 on 21 May at Decorah (DC).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Reports were 2 on 11 May at William's Prairie, Johnson Co. (JLF), 2 on 14-15 May (JLF) and 1 on 28 May (PA, RA) at Croton Unit, Shimek S.F., and 1 on 18 May at Ledges S.P. (RKM).

**Summer Tanager:** Away from their usual range in S Iowa were 1 on 13 May at Stone S.P. (BFH), 1 on 18-21 May at Lamb's Grove (GJB), 1 on 23 May at Mason City (\*JLW), and 1 on 26-29 May at Brown's Woods (SJS, m.ob.).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 1 on 24 Apr at Saylorville Res. (SJD)[ties 3rd earliest] was early.

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** Four reports this spring. Two reports lacked details while the other two reports of female/immature birds will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Blue Grosbeak:** Reports of interest were 1 male on 14 May n. of Mason City (CN), 1 female on 17 May at Big Sand Mound Preserve (T. Brush fide PCP), single males on 22 May near Melvin,

Osceola Co. (DCH) and near Hartley, O'Brien Co. (DCH), and 1 female on 28 May at Croton Unit, Shimek S.F. (PA).

**Green-tailed Towhee:** 1 found in West Des Moines in late May stayed for several weeks and is the second record for Iowa (\*CAQ, ph).

**Chipping Sparrow:** The first was 1 on 1 Apr in N Warren Co. (AJ)[3rd earliest].

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** Many reports this spring, beginning with 3 on 23 Apr at Pinky's Glen P., Fremont Co. (DLR)[3rd earliest]. Peak was 30 on 10 May at Sioux Center (JV). Many lingered until 15-20 May with the last 4 on 21 May at Sioux Center (JV).

**Field Sparrow:** The first 1 on 22 Mar in West Des Moines (PA) was a little early.

**Lark Sparrow:** 1 on 22 Apr n. of Waubonsie S.P. (MPR, BPR) and 1 on 22 Apr at Big Creek S.P. (AJ) were early.

**Lark Bunting:** A male on 28 Apr at DeSoto N.W.R. (\*MCB)[3rd earliest] was adequately described.

**Vesper Sparrow:** The first was 1 on 23 Mar e. of Sidney (SJD).

**Savannah Sparrow:** The first was 1 on 23 Mar ne. of Sidney (SJD).

**Henslow's Sparrow:** The only reports were of 2 early individuals on 18 Apr in Cerro Gordo Co. (CN, details) and 1 on 28 May in Van Buren Co. (PA, RA). Another report, with different dates on the report form and the documentation, was deleted. Double check your reports for accuracy since inconsistent reports will not be used.

**LeConte's Sparrow:** Two reports; 1 on 15 Apr at Coralville Res. (THK) and 1 on 5 May at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** Up to 5 were at Snake Creek M. on 22-29 May (SJD, details, m.ob.). This may be the most consistent spot in the state to find this elusive species.

**Fox Sparrow:** The first were 2 on 1 Mar at Folsom L. (DLR).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** The peak was 6 on 13 May at Ames (PWM). 1 on 27 May at Hickory Hill P. (RPI)[ties 3rd latest] was late.

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Many reports during May with a peak of 15 on 15 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). The last was 1 on 21 May at Jemmeron Sl. (SJD).

**Harris' Sparrow:** Again, many reports during May. Peak was 20 on 15 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK) and the last were 1 on 18 May at Dudgeon L. (SJD, JJD, HZ) and 2 on 18 May in N Warren Co. (AJ).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** 1 "Oregon" race was reported on 31 Mar at Jefferson County P. (DCP). The last was 1 on 1 May at Bacon Creek P., Woodbury Co. (SM).

**Lapland Longspur:** Few reports. Peak was 650 on 19 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

**Smith's Longspur:** The only report was of up to 150 n. of Lone Tree on 24 Mar-12 Apr (THK, m.ob., PCP-ph).

**Snow Bunting:** Peak was 28 on 4 Mar at Red Rock Res. (DCP), and the last were 4 on 24 Mar at Jester P. (AJ)[ties 3rd latest].

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** The first were 1 on 6 Apr at PJ Lakes, Mills Co. (DLR)[3rd earliest] and 12 on 7 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

**Rusty Blackbird:** Peak was 150 on 27 Mar near Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). The last was 1 on 28 Apr s. of Randolph (DLR, RR, BJR-ph)[ties 2nd latest].

**Brewer's Blackbird:** Reports included 3 on 1 Mar and 1 on 15 Apr n. of Lone Tree (THK), 62 on 23 Mar s. of Emerson (SJD), 1 on 14 Apr at Big Creek S.P. (AJ), and 1 on 28 Apr s. of Randolph (DLR, RR, BJR-ph).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** Reports included 1 female on 4 Apr at Pacific Junction (DLR), 1 male on 23, 28 Apr s. of Forney L. (DLR, RR, BJR), 2 males on 27 Apr at Otter Creek M. (\*JLF), a pair on 1 May at Hooper W.A., Warren Co. (AJ, details), 1 female on 5 May (JSi) and a pair and a nest on 23 May at Lakin Sl. (SJD, JJD), 1 male on 11 May at Big Wall L. (SJD, ASF, GBr), and 1 female on 23 May at Dunbar Sl. (JJD, SJD). This species range in Iowa has stabilized for the past several years, with most reports from C and SW Iowa.

**Orchard Oriole:** 1 on 28 Apr at Riverton W.A. (DLR, RR, BJR) was early.

**Northern Oriole:** There were many reports from late April, beginning with singles on 26 Apr in West Des Moines (PA, RA) and N Warren Co. (AJ).

**House Finch:** They're everywhere! Reports were from 16 counties scattered throughout the state. What county will be the last to record this species? Nesting was reported from Winthrop (FJP), Iowa City (THK), Ames (JJD, SJD-at least 6 nests), and West Des Moines (PA, RA).

**Red Crossbill:** The only report was 5 on 13 Apr at Davenport (fide PCP).

**White-winged Crossbill:** 4 reports after last winter's invasion, all in April; 1 male on 5, 9 Apr at Ames (N. Clark fide JJD), 1 on 9 Apr at Iowa City (THK), 1 female on 17 Apr at Rockwell (JLW, EEP), and 2 on 24 Apr at Glendale Cemetery, Des Moines (JC).

**Common Redpoll:** Reports included 30 on 3-5 Mar n. of Algona (MCK), up to 158 on 4-14 Mar at Jester P. (PA, RA, SJD), and 1 on 9-10 Mar at Davenport (PCP, MLP).  
**Pine Siskin:** Many reports were received during May. The only evidence of nesting was a dead fledgling on 19 Apr at Sioux City (SM) and at least 3 nests on the ISU campus in Ames (JJD, SJD).  
**Evening Grosbeak:** The only report was of 6-8 on 12, 13 Apr at Liscomb (K. Channell fide BPr).

## COMMENT

Reports were up slightly from 1989, and the quality of reports also improved. Most reporters provided documentation or details for unusual sightings and early/late dates. A request for details should not be taken as an offense. Rather, it is a way to improve the quality of the record, and it also lets me know that you haven't mistakenly given me a wrong date.

In reading this report, you will note that I have listed the ages (when reported) of several species, i.e., Sandhill Crane and Glaucous Gull. On species like these, where age is readily determined, I encourage you to include that information in your report.

One of the major difficulties in compiling the field reports is knowing what is unusual and what is not. It helps immensely if contributors flag records that they think are unusual. The bird doesn't have to be a rarity. Instead, it can be a species that you feel is unusual in your part of the state, for example a Cerulean Warbler in northwestern Iowa. I don't have the space to list all such records, but I have tried to include as many of these records in this report as possible.

## CONTRIBUTORS (\*=DOCUMENTATION ONLY)

\*Bill D. Abbott (BDA); Pam Allen (PA), West Des Moines; Reid Allen (RA), West Des Moines; Eloise Armstrong (EIA), Booneville; Eugene Armstrong (EuA), Booneville; \*Mary C. Babcock (MCB)-Omaha, NE; Carl J. Bendorf (CJB), Iowa City; Dick Bierman (DBi), Cherokee; \*Brian Blevins (BBI), Davenport; Gordon J. Brand (GJB), Newton; Marion M. Brewer (MMB), Cherokee; Dennis Carter (DC), Decorah; Robert I. Cecil (RIC), Des Moines; Jane Clark (JC), Clive; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), Ames; Bery Engebretsen (BE), Johnston; \*Chuck Fuller (CF), Burlington; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; J. Donald Gillaspey (JDG), Lamoni; Douglas C. Harr (DCH), Larchwood; Mary Jo Hartogh (MJH), Elma; Bill F. Huser (BFH), South Sioux City, NE; Ann Johnson (AJ), Norwalk; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Darwin Koenig (DK), Montezuma; Sharon R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; Paul W. Martsching (PWM), Ames; Steve Munzinger (SM), Sioux City; Robert K. Myers (RKM), Perry; Curt Nelson (CN), Mason City; Babs Padelford (BPd), Bellevue, NE; Loren Padelford (LPd), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; Fred J. Pierce (FJP), Winthrop; Randall Pinkston (RPi), Iowa City; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; \*Christine A. Quinn (CAQ), West Des Moines; Douglas L. Rose (DLR), Glenwood; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; Sue J. Spieker (SJS), Norwalk; Michael K. Thomas (MKT), Des Moines; Douglas E. Trapp (DET), Sioux City; John Van Dyk (JV), Orange City; Jan L. Walter (JLW), Mason City; Hank Zaletel (HZ), Colo.

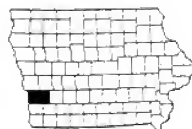
## OTHER OBSERVERS

Gordon Brown (GBr); Tanya Bray (TB); Andrew S. Fix (ASF); L. Paul Hertzell (LPH); Edna E. Peters (EEP); Mary Lou Petersen (MLP); Jerry Probst (JP); B.J. Rose (BJR); Roger Rose (RR); W. Ross Silcock (WRS).

4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, IA 50010

## BARROW'S GOLDENEYE IN POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY

ALAN G. GRENON



At 9:30 a.m. on 12 November 1989, my mother, Betty Grenon, and I visited the Iowa Power and Light plant in Pottawattamie County near the Missouri River south of Council Bluffs. We examined the waterfowl on the south pond with spotting scopes, and among the first birds we checked was a male Barrow's Goldeneye.

The bird was swimming and diving in the company of six Common Goldeneye (four adult males, an immature male, and a female) perhaps 50-100 meters north of us. The bill and head were dark (near black), with a large oblong white crescent between each eye and the bill. The head was shaped differently than those of the nearby Commons, appearing longer. The sides and breast were white. The back had more black and less white than the backs of the male Commons, with white marks almost forming a line curving up and back from near the shoulder in what appeared to be an otherwise all black back. The eyes were white to yellow. During 50 minutes of intermittent observation, we saw this group fly, and noted the Barrow's back had more black and less white than did the backs of nearby flying male Common Goldeneye. Other than as noted, the bird was similar to Common Goldeneye in size, shape, and behavior.

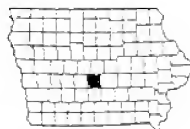
Sue and Rollin Gentes arrived during our observations and also saw the bird. To my knowledge, the bird could not be located later in the day, but a male Barrow's Goldeneye, probably the same bird, was reported there 14 and 15 November by Babs and Loren Padelford, and 15 November by B. J. Rose.

This is the third record of this species for Iowa. This location is about 44 miles south of DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge where a male Barrow's Goldeneye was seen in Iowa/Nebraska boundary waters in January 1989 (*Iowa Bird Life* 59:89-90), and less than 40 miles north of the site of Iowa's first record in March 1983 (*Iowa Bird Life* 54:75-77).

Neale Woods Nature Center, 14323 Edith Marie Avenue, Omaha, NE 68112

## A SPECTACULAR REVERSE MIGRATION AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

BERY ENGBRETSSEN



On 18 May 1990 while observing shorebirds at Saylorville's Sandpiper Beach area (for map, see location #13 in Dinsmore et al., *Iowa Bird Life* 60:2, 1990), I noted small groups of warblers in the air off the beach at about 8:30 a.m. As I left the beach area, I noted large numbers of warblers moving through the rows of trees along the exit road. I parked on the roadside and upon leaving my car, I noticed in addition to a stream of warblers moving through the trees, that as far as I could see with the naked eye, the sky was also full of warblers. Most intriguing was the fact that the birds were all heading south off the point that forms Sandpiper Beach and continuing on across Saylorville Lake.

Over the next two hours I conservatively estimate that 12,750 warblers passed over the point heading south. The numbers could have been as much as 30,000 or more. The speed of their flight was too rapid for one person to make accurate counts. Few birds paused for more than an instant in the trees in front of me. Most were in the air above the trees, some so high as to be at the limit of my vision with the naked eye. The flight stretched as far as I could see to the east and west. Through my binoculars I could see birds far out over the lake to the west and over the marina bay to the east.

To try to estimate the magnitude of the flight, I made three 5-minute counts of birds that passed within my field of vision to the west in an arc from vertical (90 degrees) to approximately 45 degrees, my vision being limited where I stood by the low trees about 40 yards in front of me. These counts were: 151, 128, and 169. I could detect very little variation in numbers during the time period of approximately 8:45 to 10:30, and numbers seemed roughly equal when I looked to the east over the open field. These counts may be used in two ways to try to estimate the total number of birds passing by. If my count arc held roughly 25% of the total 180 degrees of viewing available to me, then the total birds passing over the point would be approximately 12,750, using a rough average of 150 birds/5 minutes for 1 hour and 45 minutes, and 50 birds/5 minutes for the last 15 minutes until the flight stopped. I believe this to be a conservative estimate as my count arc did not contain the line of sight to the west horizon, and I would expect most birds to be closer to the ground. If, on the other hand, I consider that I counted only those birds that crossed a vertical plane extending from directly overhead to the trees in front of me (a rectangle with a base of 40 yards and extending upwards to the limits of my vision), then the flight contained far more birds. Birds were passing in front of me along a horizontal distance of at least a quarter of a mile, which would make the total flight some 31,500 birds.

Counting individual species proved to be just as formidable as estimating total numbers. I finally settled on three main groupings: abundant, moderate, and uncommon (three or fewer). I identified 19 species. Abundant species included (in rough order of frequency) American Redstart, Magnolia Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Solitary Vireo, Warbling Vireo, and Wilson's Warbler. In moderate numbers were Nashville Warbler, Red-eyed Vireo, Blackpoll Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and Philadelphia Vireo. There were three Orange-crowned Warblers, two Common Yellowthroats, and one each of Black-and-



white Warbler, Northern Parula, Cape May Warbler, and Mourning Warbler. Most birds (90%) passed so high or swiftly that I could not identify the species.

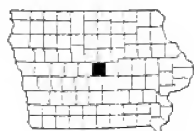
Warblers were abundant all about the lake the rest of the day. I found thirty species, total, including one Connecticut. The next day I found only a few scattered flocks.

A heavy thunderstorm had passed to the north of the lake the previous evening. The morning was cool (60s), cloudy, and with a strong south wind that slowly switched to the north as a weak front passed late in the day. Since such flights often lead to heavy mortality among migrants, I checked one of the TV towers near Alleman but found only two birds dead there. Just as amazing as the tremendous numbers of migrating birds was the fact that this large flight was flying into the face of a strong south wind. I cannot readily account for this unusual behavior.

6492 James Francis Place, Johnston, IA 50131

## BIRDING MADNESS AT BROOKSIDE PARK, AMES

ANDREW S. FIX



Sunday, 20 May 1990, produced the best passerine birding I have encountered in almost five years of residence in central Iowa. Although Brookside Park is usually known for its beauty and pleasant footpaths, recent storms and flooding had transformed it into a wooded swamp that reminded me of areas I had birded along the Canadian shore of Lake Erie, including the famous Point Pelee. Many of the usual paths had to be crossed in knee-deep water or avoided entirely. About 40% of the park was physically inaccessible. The following account describes sightings from 7:00 to 10:30 a.m. and from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Actual counts are given where available, with estimates given in parentheses. In all, I estimated that 4,500 to 5,000 individuals representing 87 species were present.

Warblers dominated the findings, with 21 species sighted. Estimates of the most numerous were Blackpoll (1,500), Ovenbird (300), Wilson's (300), Nashville (250), Common Yellowthroat (200), Black-and-white (200), American Redstart (200), Tennessee (100), Yellow-rumped (100), Chestnut-sided (60), and Yellow (50). Additional warbler species seen, but in fewer numbers, were 27 Mourning, 21 Magnolia, 15 Northern Waterthrush, 12 Orange-crowned, 11 Palm, 6 Black-throated Green, 4 Canada, and 2 Blackburnian. Several Golden-winged Warblers and Northern Parulas were heard, and about 200 waterthrushes were seen at too great a distance to identify to species.

Significant influxes of flycatchers, thrushes, and vireos were also observed. Flycatchers present included Least (800), Willow (100), and Yellow-bellied (40), 12 Eastern Wood-Pewees, and 6 Olive-sided Flycatchers. An Acadian Flycatcher was also heard. Willow Flycatchers along with Common Yellowthroats were numerous in small trees at the forest fringe. Large numbers of Swainson's (250) and Gray-checked (250) thrushes were seen. Vireo sightings were dominated by Solitary Vireos (75), plus 21 Yellow-throated, 15 Red-eyed, 8 Philadelphia, and several singing Warbling vireos.



Many other common spring migrant species were seen, including all six swallow species along adjacent flooded fields. Other noteworthy findings included Rose-breasted Grosbeak (200), 15 Clay-colored Sparrows, 15 Lincoln's Sparrows, and 2 Yellow-billed Cuckoos.

Birding Brookside that day produced an ornithological sensory overload that I had not experienced since birding Point Pelee, Ontario in the mid-1980's. Interestingly, I found out later that a friend of mine had traveled from central Iowa to Point Pelee the same weekend for a Big Day. In an ironic twist of fate, he found only 58 species.

1532 Kellogg Avenue, Ames, IA 50010

## LITTLE GULL AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE, PAM ALLEN, AND REID ALLEN



At approximately 9:30 a.m. on 8 October 1989, while birding the Sandpiper Beach area of Saylorville Reservoir, we observed an adult Little Gull feeding along the shoreline with several Ring-billed Gulls. We watched the bird until 9:34 a.m. as it flew north along the east shore of the reservoir.

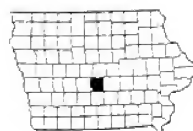
The Little Gull was noticeably smaller than the Ring-billed Gulls, perhaps half their size. It appeared slightly smaller than several nearby Bonaparte's Gulls. The upper wing was light gray with a broad white trailing edge and white wing tips. The underwings were white, except that the undersides of the flight feathers were black. The tip of the underwing was white. The dark underside of the flight feathers contrasted strongly with the rest of the wing and the white belly. The wings on the whole appeared very rounded and the bird flew with deep wingbeats, reminding us of the flight of a Short-eared Owl. The mantle was white. The tail was also white and was square-tipped. The head was also white except for the dark eye and a small, dark spot directly behind the eye. The bill was small, thin, and looked dark. Leg color was not seen. We took two distant photos which confirm our identification.

This is the first accepted record of a Little Gull in Iowa. Little Gulls have been reported around the Midwest with increasing frequency in recent years. There are recent reports from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, and North Dakota.

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames IA 50010 (SJD), 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines IA 50265 (PA, RA)

## GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE IN WEST DES MOINES

CHRISTINE A. QUINN



Toward the latter part of May as I was gardening in my backyard (which is a certified wildlife habitat with the National Wildlife Federation), I heard an unfamiliar bird song but could not locate the bird. Around 22 May 1990 I was standing on my back porch watching the finches at the finch feeder when I saw an unusual looking bird about 25 feet away underneath the quince bushes next to this feeder. The bird was

foraging using a hopping/scratching technique. The most distinctive markings were on the bird's head: a white neck and throat bib, a black stripe above and on either side of the throat, and then a white stripe on both sides and above that. I also noted a faint black stripe on the outside of the the last white stripe. The bird also had a large rust-colored cap on the top of the head and white eyebrows. The overall color of the bird was gray with some greenish tinges along the neck, wings, and tail.

In size and shape, this bird reminded me of a Gray Catbird. It was about catbird size and had a distinctive long tail that was rounded at the end. I watched this bird for several minutes before it flew away. Later that week I saw this bird using the birdbath in the backyard. It then flew over to the quince and sat and sang for quite a while before hopping down to the ground and scratching around for food. I was able to get several photographs of the bird at that time. I later determined that the bird was a Green-tailed Towhee. I placed this information on the Iowa Bird Line and then learned that this was a rare bird in Iowa. Only one or two other individuals, including Robert Naisbitt of Colfax, Iowa were able to see the bird before it left the area. Nevertheless, it was a thrill to witness this beautiful visitor to my backyard.

This is only the second record for this western species in Iowa. The first was one seen in Storm Lake on 5 May 1975 (Crocker, *Iowa Bird Life* 45:61, 1975).

605 5th Street, West Des Moines, IA 50265

## I. O. U. BUSINESS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

*Williamsburg, 7 April 1990, 10:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.*

ANN M. BARKER, SECRETARY

Members present: Jim Dinsmore (presiding), Eugene Armstrong, Ann Barker, Bob Cecil, Francis Moore, Diane Porter, Mark Proescholdt, and Carol Thompson. Also present: Eloise Armstrong.

Minutes: Minutes for the meeting of 18 November 1989 had been distributed to all members. They were approved with one correction (motion by Armstrong, seconded by Moore). The correction was that the minutes for the spring 1989 business meeting (already approved) contained an error: under Treasurer's Report 1988, the lines reading "Assets 31 Dec 1986" and "Assets 31 Dec 1987" should read "Assets 31 Dec 1987" and "Assets 31 Dec 1988", respectively.

#### Reports

Treasurer: Moore distributed financial statements for the year ended 31 December 1989, which included a fund balance breakdown. The board unanimously agreed that it was a superb accounting. It was moved (Barker, seconded by Thompson) to accept the report. Motion passed.

Education Committee: Dinsmore reported for Linda Zaletel, Beth Brown, Rick Hollis and Laura Jackson that the booklet of exercises on birds is close to completion. The committee intends to circulate a draft at the spring meeting in May. The Iowa Conservation Education Council will help with its distribution, which hopefully will be done by fall. Proescholdt suggested that it be done after the fall semester begins.

Publications Committee: A call for proposals for the editorship of *Iowa Bird Life* was issued in the fall newsletter, following Tom Kent's resignation. The committee also contacted several potential candidates. Voting by mail ballot, the committee, composed of John Fleckenstein, Pete Petersen, Dave Edwards and Ann Barker, approved Jim Dinsmore as the new editor. Dinsmore has resigned from the Publications Committee and has asked Pete Petersen to serve as acting chair. Petersen agreed. Copy is prepared for the Winter issue, and it should be mailed by the end of April. The board commended Dinsmore on his progress, and questioned whether the editor should shoulder the

entire cost of a new computer to prepare the journal. It was suggested that he consider using recycled paper.

On another matter, a request was received from another state journal to reprint Ann Johnson's article, "The Fine Art of Documentation", published in *Iowa Bird Life*, Vol. 59, No. 3. The board had no problem with this and felt the decision should be left to the editor and the author.

Records Committee: Tom Kent resigned as secretary of the committee. Tanya Bray has been nominated to fill the position to be vacated by Ross Silcock, whose term expires in May. It was moved (Moore, seconded by Cecil) to approve the nomination. The motion passed. Eugene Armstrong has been nominated to fill the position of Steve Dinsmore, who resigned. It was moved (Thompson, seconded by Cecil) to approve the nomination. The motion carried. Bendorf has been asked and has agreed to become secretary of the committee. Mark Proescholdt has been nominated to fill the position of Carl Bendorf.

Nominating Committee: Carol Thompson, Pete Petersen and Jim Sinclair have prepared a slate of officers and board members to be presented at the spring meeting. They are: Hilda Sickels, secretary; Wayne Livermore, treasurer; Eloise Armstrong and Rick Hollis, board members. Additional nominations will be sought from the floor at the spring meeting.

Breeding Bird Atlas Committee: Thompson reported that the committee, composed of Laura Jackson, Bob Cecil, John Fleckenstein and herself, met in March, with Jim Hansen and others from the Iowa D.N.R. A map of completed and vacant blocks will be presented at the spring meeting. Their goal is to complete all priority blocks and at least one standard block for each county this year. Fund raising for publication of the results is being researched. The nongame program of the Iowa D.N.R. is helping with data processing; some software problems need to be worked out yet. This is the last year for the project and all I.O.U. members will be strongly encouraged to participate so that the study will be as complete as possible.

Big Day Committee: Armstrong reported that Ray Cummins has mailed out forms and encouraged all to participate.

Membership Committee: Dinsmore reported for Jim Sinclair that the mailing to interested feeder survey participants netted around 50 new members.

#### Old Business

At the fall business meeting, Jim Hansen had inquired whether the I.O.U. help fund the D.N.R.'s Peregrine Falcon release project. To date, 10 peregrines have been released in an attempt to encourage this species to nest in Iowa cities. It was moved (Cecil, seconded by Porter) to recommend to the membership that I.O.U. make a donation to the project. In the discussion that followed, specific amounts were considered, and a decision was deferred until after the budget has been approved. At that point, the board agreed to suggest that the donation be \$250.

#### New Business

Dinsmore reported that Jim Fuller is doing an outstanding job with the birdline. Fuller prepared a statistical report on birdline usage for the year 1989, as follows:

Total calls	4,767	
Mean calls/week	92	
Range by week (low)	49	(30 May-4 June)
(high)	239	(13 Feb-19 Feb)
Total reports	320	
Mean reports/week	6	
Range by week (low)	1	(19 June-25 June)
(high)	19	(20 Nov-26 Nov)

Eugene Armstrong suggested that the telephone company should give us rebate on line costs as a result of the revenue generated by the birdline.

Future meetings: Plans are set for the Tri-state meeting at LaCrosse on May 18. PM Sunday morning, the field trip leaders will take Iowa members on a one-way trip into northeast Iowa. The board set plans for a luncheon and compilation to be held at Yellow River Forest at noon.

The fall 1990 meeting is an early one, planned for Council Bluffs' Iowa Western Community College on the weekend of August 24-26. Barb Wilson has investigated facilities, and details were discussed. The board unanimously approved the date and location.

Francis Moore has been investigating the possibility of holding the spring 1990 meeting in Waterloo on the third weekend in May, hosted by the Prairie Rapids Audubon Society. The location will be an unspecified hotel. Moore will also check into a county-owned area just north of town. The board approved the date and location.

A suggestion was made that the fall 1991 meeting be held in the south-central part of the state.

Field trips held by I.O.U. have proven quite popular, and the possibility of holding one in the summer at Union Slough was discussed. Permission would be needed to drive in a restricted area. Bob Cecil and Eugene Armstrong will coordinate details and announce plans in May.

The proposed budget for 1990 was distributed and discussed. Income for the year will only slightly exceed expenses. It was moved (Thompson, seconded by Barker) to recommend to the membership that dues for 1991 be increased to \$15 for a regular membership. The motion passed on a 5-1 vote, with Armstrong abstaining. The board agreed that the subscription rate should stay at \$15. It was moved (Dinsmore, seconded by Thompson) that life memberships be increased to \$300. The motion passed on a 5-2 vote. It was moved (Armstrong, seconded by Moore) to approve the budget. The motion passed.

There are no plans for the board to meet at LaCrosse. The meeting was adjourned.

#### Treasurers Report--1989, Francis Moore, Treasurer

Assets 31 Dec 1988		\$15,948.94
1989 addition	9,569.65	
Assets 31 Dec 1989		\$25,518.59
Cash	12,332.19	
CDs	12,422.14	
Interest on CDs	764.26	
Income 1989		\$15,751.26
Contributions	3,428.16	
Members	1,469.36	
Bird-a-thon	424.86	
Birdline	180.00	
Book royalties	76.31	
Other	1,277.63	
Membership/subscriptions	10,365.50	
First member	7,797.00	
Second member	508.00	
Third + members	22.00	
New life members	812.50	
Subscriptions	1,226.00	
Sales-I.O.U. materials	424.34	
Interest income	1,050.51	
Meeting income	482.75	
Expenses 1989		\$6,181.61
Publications Committee	5,340.30	
Iowa Bird Life	4,569.89	
I.O.U. News	770.41	
Committee/officer expenses	841.31	
Records Committee	2.58	
Treasurers expenses	141.19	
Board of Directors	14.81	
Birdline	316.29	
Materials (t-shirts)	147.63	
Other	218.81	

#### Breakdown of Fund Balances, 31 December 1989

Endowment (total fund)	7,390.70
General Endowment	3,350.20
Bird-a-thon	1,222.85
Book royalties	2,817.65
Life Memberships	5,100.00
Birdline Fund	457.90
Breeding Bird Atlas	400.00
Meeting fund	482.75
Operating Fund	11,687.24

Total Fund Balance \$25,518.59

## SPRING BUSINESS MEETING

*LaCrosse, Wisconsin, 19 May 1990, 4:30-5:45 p.m.*

ANN M. BARKER, SECRETARY

Presiding: Jim Dinsmore, President

Minutes: The minutes for the fall 1989 meeting had been published in the winter issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. The dates for the meetings were corrected as follows: fall business meeting-16 September and Board of Directors meeting-17 September. It was moved (Carol Thompson, seconded by Mark Proescholdt) that the minutes be approved as published with the above correction. The motion passed.

### Reports

Treasurer: Francis Moore distributed copies of the 1989 financial statement. The report, which is a compilation and not a full audit, was discussed. Moore was commended by Dinsmore and the membership for an excellent report.

Records Committee: Carl Bendorf summarized the flurry of recent activity: Ross Silcock, whose term expired, has been replaced by Tanya Bray. Steve Dinsmore resigned, and Eugene Armstrong will replace him. Tom Kent resigned as Secretary of the committee and Carl Bendorf will assume that position. Mark Proescholdt will replace Bendorf on the committee. Other current members are Francis Moore, Ray Cummins, and Bob Cecil.

Publications Committee: Dinsmore listed a series of changes since the last general meeting: Bob Cecil and Linda Zaletel resigned as committee members. Ann Barker (term to 1994) and Dave Edwards (term to 1991) were nominated as replacements, and were approved by the board. Tom Kent resigned as editor of *Iowa Bird Life* in the fall. Following that, the committee met and set up a process to select a new editor. Applications were solicited through the newsletter, and specific attempts were made to encourage members who might be interested in the job. Jim Dinsmore was elected by mail ballot as the new editor. He then resigned as chair of the Publications Committee, and asked Pete Petersen to act as chair.

Membership Committee: Jim Sinclair plans to send membership information to feeder survey participants who indicated an interest in the I.O.U. Membership for 1989 was over 500, and as of 1 April 1990, is 513. Information on membership has been available at this meeting to MOU and WSO members.

Education Committee: Rick Hollis reported that the group has made significant progress on the booklet of exercises on birds for use in Iowa classrooms. Its completion is anticipated for fall, or at the latest by next spring's meeting. Anyone who has suggestions for content to be included should advise the committee. Volunteers are being sought to act as resource people whom teachers could contact with questions on Iowa bids. The Iowa Conservation Education Council will help distribute the materials.

Breeding Bird Atlas Committee: Carol Thompson presented a map of completed blocks and areas with priority blocks that need to be finished. The majority of priority blocks are completed, but most standard blocks still need work. Publications options are being considered. John Fleckenstein announced the upcoming Natural History Association foray in Benton County. Atlas work will be done; he encouraged participation. Jim Hansen reported that federal grant money is available for payment of mileage and expenses incurred in doing atlas work; anyone interested in this should contact him.

## Old Business

At its April meeting, the board recommended that I.O.U. contribute \$250 to the D.N.R.'s Peregrine Falcon reintroduction project. Total cost of the program this year will be \$20,000. It was moved (Rick Hollis, seconded by Bud Gode) that the I.O.U. donate \$250 to the program. The motion carried.

## New Business

Harold White, host of the fall 1989 meeting at West Lake Okoboji, had a fund surplus of \$605. He donated \$122 of that to the Quad City Audubon Society, hosts of the spring 1989 meeting to reimburse that group for its loss. The remaining \$483 was given to the I.O.U. to be placed in a special fund to reimburse future meeting hosts for any losses incurred. At its November meeting, the board set up the special fund, and modified its policy so that I.O.U. will be responsible for reasonable (at the discretion of the board) losses incurred in hosting annual meetings.

Future meetings: The fall 1990 meeting has been proposed for Iowa Western Community College, Council Bluffs, the weekend of 24-26 August. This early date was suggested by the board because of better availability of accommodations and because southwestern Iowa refuges and waterfowl hunting areas will be closed later in the season. It was moved (Jackie Gardner, seconded by Hank Zalcetel) to approve the proposal. The motion carried.

A proposal has been received from Waterloo to hold the spring 1991 meeting there the second weekend of May. Francis Moore will be in charge. It was moved (Carl Bendorf, seconded by Bud Gode) to accept this invitation. The motion carried.

Rick Hollis suggested that Tom Kent should be recognized for his outstanding service to the I.O.U. The board will discuss this at its next meeting. Jim Fuller moved that the I.O.U. give a certificate or letter of thanks to Tom Kent. The motion was seconded and passed.

I.O.U. dues have remained stable for several years. Because the balance between income and expenses on the approved budget for 1990 was close, the board proposed a dues increase for 1991 as follows: Regular membership from \$12 to \$15 and Life Membership from \$250 to \$300. It was moved (Francis Moore, seconded by Carol Thompson) to raise the dues for 1991 as proposed. The motion carried.

The Nominating Committee, composed of Pete Petersen, Carol Thompson, and Jim Sinclair, presented the following slate of officers and board members for consideration for election to office: Secretary-Hilda Sickels (to replace Ann Barker); Treasurer-Wayne Livermore (to replace Francis Moore); Board of Directors-Eloise Armstrong and Rick Hollis (to replace Eugene Armstrong and Beth Brown). Dinsmore opened the floor for nominations for Secretary. There were none and Hilda Sickels was elected Secretary. Dinsmore called for further nominations for Treasurer. There were none and Wayne Livermore was elected Treasurer. Dinsmore called for further nominations for the Board of Directors. There were none and Eloise Armstrong and Rick Hollis were elected directors.

Mark Proescholdt reflected that the authors of *Iowa Birds* have contributed greatly to the knowledge of Iowa birding. All royalties (\$2800) have been donated by the authors to the I.O.U. endowment fund. It was moved (Proescholdt, seconded by Carl Bendorf) that we thank them for their great contribution to the I.O.U. and Iowa's birding knowledge and confer life memberships on those authors who are not presently life members. The motion carried.

## Announcements

A silent auction of bird books at the meeting netted \$61.50 for the Endowment Fund. Fred Pierce, the first editor of *Iowa Bird Life* and the only living I.O.U. charter member still resides in Winthrop and would enjoy visits from members. Jackie Hill said bluebird nest box report forms were available. Jim Fuller's report on the birdline use was summarized (see 7 April 1990 Board of Directors meeting minutes). Carl Bendorf commented that our birdline was the best of any around. Fuller received a hearty round of applause. Francis Moore reminded members that donations are still needed for the birdline. The meeting was adjourned.

## REVIEWS

**A Field Guide to Advanced Birding** by Kenn Kaufman. Houghton Mifflin, Boston. 1990. 299 pp, paperbound, \$14.95, hardcover \$22.95. Kenn Kaufman is a well-known expert on identification of North American birds. He edited the elegant, albeit short-lived, journal *Continental Birdlife*, writes the photo quiz in *Birding*, developed the ABA records file which is associated with the VIREO collection of bird photos, has written numerous identification articles for *Birding* and *American Birds*, and is a professional bird tour leader. A number of chapters in the current book have been previously published.

Advanced Birding, as it is called on the cover, begins with a 20-page discussion of challenges in birding including topics such as how to look at a bird, molt and wear, pitfalls in observations, documentation, basic rules of field identification, terminology, and bird topography. The topography section gives more detail and explanation than standard field guides. Most of the book consists of chapters on identification of problem species. The section called Bibliography discusses some major books and journals that are of use for identification problems, explains literature citations, indicates how libraries may be of help, and lists references grouped by the chapters in the book.

The chapters deal with selected identification problems. These include winter loons, Western Grebe complex, white herons, dark ibises, scaup, accipiters, dowitchers, Sharp-tailed and Pectoral sandpipers, Semipalmated and Western sandpipers, jaegers, Franklin's and Laughing gulls, Thayer's Gull complex, medium-sized terns, screech owls, hummingbirds, sapsuckers, wood pewees, *Empidonax* flycatchers, chickadees, Bendire's Thrasher, Philadelphia Vireo complex, blackpoll trio, waterthrushes, Cassin's and Botteri's sparrows, *Spizella* sparrows, and *Carpodacus* sparrows. There are additional chapters with selected information on ducks, shorebirds, gulls, terns, warblers, and sparrows. The author chose not to deal with problems of pelagic birding and Asiatic strays.

I think Kaufman has done a fine job in choosing North America's top birding problems. He invites additional topics for future editions. It is easy to see that almost all of the problems discussed have been encountered in Iowa, many of them on a regular basis. More than one-fourth of the records reviewed by the I.O.U. Records Committee involve species covered in this book. Some additional topics that would be of interest in Iowa include eiders, Ferruginous Hawk, falcons, pipits, grosbeaks, and redpolls.

The chapters include a discussion of the problem, preliminary points, field marks, and sometimes a summary or chart. The content of these sections varies widely, depending on the nature of the problem. The chapters are illustrated with the author's own line drawings, which are used to show key points. I agree with the author's decision not to use color plates. The line drawings focus attention on morphology and keep the price reasonable.

This book does indeed begin where the field guides leave off. Many of the problems focus on drab plumages and problems of molt and wear not covered in the standard guides. Kaufman uses his vast experience and teaching skills to guide the reader to an approach to identification, rather than just presentation of dry facts. Although I found relatively little information that I had not encountered elsewhere in the literature, I was happy to have so much information condensed into an inexpensive, compact (4.5 x 7.25 x 0.75 inches) field book.

This book is clearly an authoritative one. Kaufman researched the content extensively by looking at museum specimens and photographs, talking to other birders, and looking at birds in the field. The author, however, invites the reader to challenge authority when viewing individual birds and to find the errors in his book. Serious birders will want to read the book in its entirety and keep it handy for future reference.--Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

**Where the Birds Are. A Guide to All 50 States and Canada** by John C. Jones. William Morrow and Co., New York, 1990, 400 pp., softbound \$15.95. This guide to North American birding areas has serious limitations. The book starts with a fairly good 20-page summary of how to get started in birding a new area. Most of the book consists of writeups on birding areas in all of the states and provinces followed by a 180-page (!) table. The main problem is that Jones seems to think that the only places to find birds are national wildlife refuges and lands managed by The Nature Conservancy. Consider his 3-page account of Iowa. He lists 12 local Audubon chapters (but no names or phone numbers), 19 areas managed by The Nature Conservancy, and four national wildlife refuges. The locator map for the conservancy areas is totally inadequate (e.g., Steele Prairie is near Cherokee) and there is no indication of what birds you might find at each area. There is a short writeup for each national wildlife refuge along with a map (adequate for some but useless for the Upper Mississippi River refuge), and a short table summarizing the refuge's bird list by season and status (abundant, common, etc). These tables have limited value since most birders already know that more species will be found there in spring and fall. There is no mention of state wildlife areas or preserves, county areas, or a state birding group. The Iowa birdline is listed although it has a out-of-date number. In short, this book does little to introduce a visitor to Iowa's birding areas. Accounts of other states are similar, and I am sure that hundreds of the continent's best birding areas are not mentioned. The monster table summarizes all of the refuge bird lists. I suppose there might be some use to know where a certain species has been reported but in general the list is limited and cumbersome. A table listing the page on which various species are covered in each of nine field guides may be useful to some readers but a similar table for super-rare species will appeal only to the hardcore birders. In summary, I cannot recommend this book. There are some good continental guides to birding areas available but this is not one of them.--James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, IA 50010.

**A Parrot Without a Name** by Don Stap. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 1990. 239 pp., hardbound \$19.95. In 1987, college professor Don Stap accompanied an expedition from Louisiana State University into the rainforest of eastern Peru in search of rare birds. The leader of the expedition, John O'Neill of L.S.U. is famous for his discoveries of new species of birds, having discovered 12 new species since he started visiting the area in 1961. Stap gives a easygoing account of this expedition and makes it clear that fieldwork in eastern Peru is not for those who are used to the comforts of home. The author breaks up his account of the 1987 expedition with flashbacks to previous work in the region. These include a 1985 trip he took to another part of Peru with famous birder Ted Parker along with descriptions of some of O'Neill's earlier discoveries. These give a fascinating picture this region, the people involved in these discoveries, and assorted ways that new birds were found. This is a book for pleasure reading. Once I started it, I found it hard to put it down.--J.J.D.